

DR. GIBBS. Well, Ma, the day has come. You're losin' one of your chicks.

MRS. GIBBS. Frank Gibbs, don't you say another word. I feel like crying every minute. *(crosses to pour coffee at the table for him)* Sit down and drink your coffee.

(MRS. WEBB peels and slices potatoes at table above stove.)

DR. GIBBS. *(sits down at his breakfast table, tucks napkin into neck, puts sugar in coffee)* The groom's up shaving himself – only there ain't an awful lot to shave.

(MRS. GIBBS sets pot on stove and crosses to cupboard for silver.)

Whistling and singing, like he's glad to leave us. – Every now and then he says, "I do" to the mirror, but it don't sound convincing to me. *(blows coffee and drinks)*

MRS. GIBBS. *(crossing to table to set places for herself and Rebecca)* I declare, Frank, I don't know how he'll get along. I've arranged his clothes and seen to it he's put warm things on – Frank! They're too young. Emily won't think of such things. He'll catch his death of cold within a week.

DR. GIBBS. I was remembering my wedding morning, Julia.

MRS. GIBBS. *(crossing to stove to turn French toast)* Now don't start that, Frank Gibbs.

DR. GIBBS. *(smiling)* I was the scarestest young fella in the State of New Hampshire. I thought I'd make a mistake for sure.

(MRS. GIBBS crosses to the cupboard to pour milk.)
And when I saw you comin' down that aisle I thought you were the prettiest girl I'd ever seen, but the only trouble was that I'd never seen you before. There I was in the Congregational Church marryin' a total stranger.

MRS. GIBBS. *(crossing to table with milk for Rebecca)* And how do you think I felt! *(serves his toast)* – Frank, weddings are perfectly awful things. Farces, – that's what they are!

(She puts a plate before him.)

Here, I've made something for you.

DR. GIBBS. Why, Julia Hersey – French toast!

MRS. GIBBS. *(pleased)* 'Tain't hard to make and I had to do something. *(turns, suddenly serious, crosses to stove and serves self)*

DR. GIBBS. How'd you sleep last night, Julia? *(eats)*

MRS. GIBBS. *(crossing to sit at table with own plate and coffee)* Well, I heard a lot of the hours struck off.

DR. GIBBS. *(thoughtfully)* Ye-e-s! I get a shock every time I think of George setting out to be a family man – that great gangling thing! – I tell you Julia, there's nothing so terrifying in the world as a son. The relation of father and son is the darndest, awkwardest –

MRS. GIBBS. *(stirs coffee)* Well, mother and daughter's no picnic, let me tell you. *(drinks)*

DR. GIBBS. They'll have a lot of troubles, I suppose, but that's none of our business. Everybody has a right to their own troubles.

(MRS. WEBB washes dishes.)

MRS. GIBBS. *(at the table, drinking her coffee, meditatively)* Yes...people are meant to go through life two by two. 'Tain't natural to be lonesome. *(cuts toast)*

(Pause. DR. GIBBS starts laughing.)

DR. GIBBS. Julia, do you know one of the things I was scared of when I married you?

MRS. GIBBS. Oh, go along with you! *(eats)*

DR. GIBBS. I was afraid we wouldn't have material for conversation more'n'd last us a few weeks.

(Both laugh.)

I was afraid we'd run out and eat our meals in silence, that's a fact. – Well, you and I been conversing for twenty years now without any noticeable barren spells. *(eats)*